



## **LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER**

San Mateo • Santa Clara • San Benito Counties

### **Sierra Club Statement on the CVSP Plan Refinement Approach**

January 14, 2008

The Sierra Club has been a participant in the Coyote Valley Specific Plan task force process since August 2003 and an official member of the task force since April 2006. Our consistent, ongoing participation has provided us with a wealth of information and opportunities to provide input on the process. As a committed participant it has been our responsibility to review, assess and respond to all the materials and information provided to the task force. It is through this process that it has become clear that the proposed specific plan is not consistent with the sustainable vision of San Jose's current general plan or the recently adopted Mayor's Green Vision. Furthermore, the results of the environmental impact report and economic analysis appear as dramatic red flags warning of substantial risk at a time when we should all be following the precautionary principle –

"When an activity raises threats of harm to human health or the environment, precautionary measures should be taken even if some cause and effect relationships are not fully established scientifically. In this context the proponent of an activity, rather than the public, should bear the burden of proof." ([www.precaution.org](http://www.precaution.org))

We do not believe the project proponents have made an adequate case for the proposed project, much less the appropriateness of a new community of up to 80,000 people on precious farmland and wildlife habitat. The near future implications of global warming for energy and water supply fundamentally changes the context in which planning takes place, further underscoring the need to stop doing business as usual. San Jose has embarked on a general plan update providing an opportunity for city residents to evaluate the suitability of the housing and job allocations for the Coyote Valley Urban Reserve which have largely informed the current planning process.

Since the release of the draft environmental impact report and water supply assessment in 2007 all efforts at plan refinement have avoided addressing the most challenging question – is this the right plan for the location? It is our informed and reasoned opinion that it is not and that it is time to bring the current planning process for the Coyote Valley Specific Plan to a close. We believe that a future dialogue about possible development for Coyote Valley would be appropriate after the general plan update has been completed. Now is the time to focus our energy on helping San Jose plan a future as a model sustainable community that creates exciting new human habitat within the existing urban footprint.